



News Release

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Utah Convenes Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Summit

(Layton, UT) – Lieutenant Governor Gary R. Herbert today convened the Governor’s summit with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt and other federal, state and local officials to discuss current and future efforts to prepare Utah and the nation for a potential influenza pandemic. At the summit, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) launched the new www.pandemicflu.utah.gov Web site, which provides tools and resources to help Utahns plan for pandemic influenza.

About 500 Utah leaders in government, business, health care, emergency management, education and community and faith-based organizations attended the afternoon summit held at the Davis Conference Center in Layton, Utah. The summit was the first of its kind for Utah.

“Pandemics are global in nature but their effects are always local, so I am pleased that Governor Huntsman is taking a leadership role to prepare Utah for this threat,” Leavitt said. “Pandemic planning needs to address how schools, businesses, public agencies, faith-based organizations and others participate in pandemic preparedness. With this meeting, local officials can identify needs specific to Utah communities and begin crucial coordination to assure readiness if a pandemic outbreak strikes.”

“As the nation and world prepare for a potential pandemic influenza, so too must Utah,” Herbert said. “Utah has accomplished a lot already, but we still have a lot more to do.

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Preparing for an influenza pandemic is a community-wide effort that requires all of us to participate and to be accountable for how well we prepare and respond.”

Herbert said that pandemic influenza will impact everyone in Utah, not just those who become ill. Government agencies are preparing, planning and practicing. Businesses, community organizations and individuals also need to prepare for this possible threat.

“Preparedness means going beyond traditional public health and government planning,” said Dr. David N. Sundwall, executive director, UDOH. “Today’s summit is an example of the collaboration needed at all levels of government and in all sectors of society.”

Leavitt was joined by Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention; James Caverly, director of the Infrastructure Partnerships Division at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; and Stephen Johnson, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In addition, various members of the Governor’s Cabinet and other community representatives participated in an interactive panel discussion with summit participants. Summit attendees received a training tool that they can use to enhance their preparedness efforts.

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